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ART AND REQUIREMENTS OF COMMAND (ARC).

VOLUME III:
HISTORICAL STUDIES.

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FOREWORD

This volume is part of a four-volume study conducted by
the Systems Science Department of The Franklin Institute Re-
search Laboratories. The overall study, *Art and Requirements
of Command*, is aimed at identifying and analyzing the command-
control support requirements of senior commanders. The focus
of the study is the commander — his requirements for communi-
cating and for receiving objective and subjective information.

Volume I, *Summary Report*, describes the methodology em-
ployed in, and the overall objectives of, the entire study
effort. Study findings are presented and a detailed, four-
stage description of the command process is included. In
Volume I, a preliminary command-control support requirements
model is developed.

Volume II, *Generalship Study*, reports the findings of a
major study effort. A "generalship" or "command" question-
naire was developed and distributed to 150 general officers —
active and retired. On the basis of more than 80 replies, a
composite portrait of the command process was developed.
This volume also contains a compendium of selected question-
naire responses.

This volume, *Historical Studies*, summarizes a composite
command portrait developed on the basis of review of selected
past commanders. This study was performed by Col. Wesley
Yale, USA Ret., and Gen. I. D. White, USA Ret., consultants
to The Franklin Institute; and by members of the Institute
staff. It serves as a basis for comparing past with con-
temporary command methods, techniques, and procedures and
provides valuable insights into many aspects of the command
process.

Volume IV, *Seventh Army Command Process Study*, reports
another major effort. It summarizes the command-process
description and analysis developed through a questionnaire-
interview program. In that volume, common patterns of
Seventh Army command methods, techniques, and practices are
identified and integrated into a composite command portrait.

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PROCEDURE

The objective of this portion of the overall effort was to develop a composite command portrait based on study of a selected number of *past* commanders. The specific commanders designated for review were:

Napoleon Bonaparte
Omar Bradley
Mark Clark
Nathan B. Forrest
Douglas MacArthur
Hasso Von Manteuffel
George S. Patton
Erwin Rommel
Hans Speidel
Joseph Stilwell
John S. Wood

It should be noted here that although several of those selected for study are *widely* acknowledged to have been superior commanders, there is not, and cannot be, universal agreement as to their "greatness." Selection of commanders to be reviewed was not, therefore, made on the basis of reputation alone. Availability of relevant materials was the ultimate and decisive criterion for selection. In addition, certain of the commanders were chosen because their former colleagues were available for questionning (as, for example, in the case of Field Marshal Rommel). Field Marshal Rommel and General Von Manteuffel were selected as non-American commanders who are generally held to be masters of mobile warfare.

Although this study looked back into history - focusing on *past* commanders - the actual method of analysis combined historial research, direct interview, and questionnaire techniques. This method was designed to meet three critical requirements: First, that the analysis of each commander be as complete as possible; secondly, that some general format be devised which would facilitate comparisons once the individual analyses

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had been completed; and, thirdly, that a means be developed to offset the inherent limitations of pure "historical" studies.

A questionnaire was, therefore, developed as a basis for all inquiries and as a means of highlighting information categories of especial interest. This questionnaire (appended to the study summary which follows) was first sent to the former Chiefs of Staff to Field Marshal Rommel, to General Wood, and to General Von Manteuffel. Interviews were then arranged for, to permit a probing of their questionnaire responses. This same questionnaire served as a framework within which analysis of the remaining commanders was conducted.

By interviewing several persons who knew and/or had served under Field Marshal Rommel, it was possible to obtain a complete and incisive portrait of Rommel as a commander. Although there were no significant variations in replies, the technique of cross-checking through several interviewees was of considerable value to the researchers. A selected number of questions and answers are presented in the following chart as an illustration of results obtained through use of this technique.

Once the individual analyses had been completed, the composite was developed. Despite the inclusion of certain variations in command techniques and methods, this composite does stress similarities over differences. The analyses of these individual commanders did, in fact, point to the existence of *common patterns;* surprisingly few - and relatively minor - divergences from these patterns were uncovered.

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QUESTIONNAIRE WORK SHEET - FIELD MARSHAL ROMMEL

(Selected Questions and Responses)

PLANNING PHASE

Text of Question	Gen. Alfred Gause	Gen. F. W. von Mellenthin	Gen. Siegfried Westphal
In general, where did Rommel station himself during the planning phase of operations?	There were no "phases" of planning. It took place constantly, during daily conversations, during trips to the front and during lunch or dinner which I usually took with the Field Marshal.	His position was divided between the Command Post and the front.	Position divided between the Command Post and the front.
Did Rommel accept orders from above without question? Was it frequently necessary to ask for clarification? Was Rommel ever permitted to give his opinion on orders from above or to modify them?	Libya was Italian territory. Hitler scarcely interfered up to the turning point of El Alamein. Hitler showed consideration for Mussolini's prestige. In the overall planning, the German High Command (OKW), the Italian High Command and the Governor General of Libya took part. The results always followed Rommel's proposals. If changes were required during an operation, Rommel always used his own judgment without consulting anyone, and sometimes contrary to the wishes of the Italian Supreme Command and the Governor General. Rommel also made strategic decisions. Independence applied to Africa only. In Italy and France the commanders were bound to Hitler's personal minute directions, as were the supreme commanders on other fronts.	The Afrika Corps was subordinate to the Italian High Command, from whom orders or instructions were seldom received. Rommel always gave a definite opinion on the practicability of operations and made changes in emergencies.	He always gave his opinions and modified orders as necessary.
Did subordinate commanders participate in planning?	Subordinate commanders seldom entered into planning since Rommel knew the efficiency of his troops as well as the subordinate commanders did. When a decision was made he discussed the execution of plans with commanders in due course, sometimes in the form of map maneuvers (war gaming).	No.	Rarely.
Did Rommel remain at the Command Post while the staff was developing detailed orders?	He made a personal terrain reconnaissance.	No. He went immediately to the front.	He made a personal reconnaissance.

QUESTIONNAIRE WORK SHEET - FIELD MARSHAL ROMMEL

(Selected Questions and Responses)

PLANNING PHASE

Text of Question	Gen. Alfred Gause	Gen. F. W. von Mellenthin	Gen. Siegfried Westphal
Were operations orders issued orally or in writing?	Mostly oral, confirmed later in writing. Personal radio orders were transmitted by special signal and were given top precedence.	Usually oral orders by radio. Con-firmed later in writing.	* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
What was the communications linkage between Rommel and subordinate commanders?	Varied between radio, liaison officers and personal visits.	Radio. - personal visits.	Radio and personal visits.
Were orders issued directly or through the staff?	Directly, sometimes through liaison officers.	Rommel frequently gave direct orders, later confirmed in writing by the staff.	Command radio direct orders, or through liaison officers.
If directly, how was the staff informed?	By radio.	By radio.	Radio. It was a principle to give only essential orders and these as fast as possible.
Were operations initiated with frag-mentary orders?	Frequently.	Occasionally.	Frequently.
About how far was the Main Command Post from the forward battle line?	Most of the time Rommel selected a place close to troops so that he could feel secure from enemy Commando action.	2000-5000 meters.	8 - 10,000 meters at maximum
Were senior staff officers used to take despatches to subordinate commanders?	No.	No.	Seldom.
Were senior staff officers used to assist in supervising the action of major sub-ordinate commanders, without actually interfering with the commander but keep-ing the Field Marshal informed?	This was the task of German liaison officers.	No.	No. Rommel was constantly roaming.

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QUESTIONNAIRE WORK SHEET   FIELD MARSHAL   ROMMEL

(Selected Questions and Responses)

OPERATIONS PHASE

Text of Question	Gen. Alfred Gause	Gen. F. W. von Mellenthin	Gen. Siegfried Westphal
During operations what was Rommel's position with respect to sub-commands?	At the front - near a critical action. He directed operations as a matter of principle; since his decisions were based on personal observation, no time was lost in waiting for reports. But decisions were not based solely on personal observations, - radio reports were considered.	The Field Marshal was always at the point where key action occurred.	Kept to the front.
Was personal observation of critical action a guiding principle?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did he personally interfere in the conduct of a subordinate element?	Frequently, - and as necessary. He influenced control of subordinate units, but always assumed responsibility for results.	Frequently	Occasionally
At what point in the action did Rommel leave the Command Post?	Rommel left the CP at the start of the operation and went to the point of main effort. Every unit and man knew that in the most difficult situations, no matter how heavy the fire, the Field Marshal would appear in person and master the situation.	About 0500 hours daily after giving orders for the day.	After receipt of first reports of action.
Was he in touch with the Command Post while absent?	Constantly	Frequently	Frequently
What means of contact was used?	Radio	Radio	Radio. - frequent visits.
What was the position of the advanced Command Post?	There was no static advance Command Post. At the point of main effort, Rommel led flexibly together with the Chief of Staff and a few messenger officers. The group moved in one or two standard command cars and 5-6 Volkswagens. It was followed by 14-15 motorized radio stations which maintained contact with the Command Posts of the Afrika Corps, Italian Corps and some divisions. German liaison officers with radios were attached to Italian Corps and Divisions.	Near the front.	Near the front line.

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QUESTIONNAIRE WORK SHEET - FIELD MARSHAL ROMMEL
(Selected Questions and Responses)

OPERATIONS PHASE

Text of Question	Gen. Alfred Gause	Gen. F. W. von Mellenthin	Gen. Siegfried Westphal
Did Rommel separate himself even from this advance location?	As stated, there was no specific advance location. The above group moved with Rommel	See Gause.	Occasionally. Actually from time to time Rommel was out of touch with the Command Post and even the Chief or Staff, on reconnaissance or staff visits. On one occasion 4 days.
Was the Chief of Staff used to coordinate the staff in the Main Command Post?	No particular adjustment was necessary since the work of each section was understood.	No coordination necessary.	Work proceeded by SOP or order.
Were elements of the staff in communication with one another?	Yes, - wire and radio.	Wire and radio.	Not all elements - staff was too large.
If a reserve was contemplated, did its commander accompany Rommel or stay with reserve troops?	Stayed with reserve troops. But to increase the certainty of being able to influence the battle, Rommel created a special combat group under his direct command which was committed only on his orders; this might occur only at the last moment. The group approximated battalion size, with latest weapons and included tanks, armored cars and SP artillery. It was equipped with the latest communications and was commanded by a very young and versatile captain.	Stayed with troops. Orders given by radio.	Sometimes went with Rommel. Usually stayed with troops.
If changes were indicated, did Rommel issue orders or was further staff planning necessary?	Personal orders given.	Personal orders of Field Marshal.	* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

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EVALUATION OF METHOD

As noted in the preceding description of "Method," one of the major difficulties with this type of analysis lies in the actual *selection* of persons to be studied. Decisions as to who is a "superior" commander are always open to dispute. And despite the fact that availability of relevant materials was in each instance the decisive criterion, the list of persons finally selected remains a probable object of some controversy.

A second difficulty arises from the size of the sample. We can neither claim that the actual sample size is "ideal," nor that it is "statistically reliable." The number of commanders selected was dependent upon a variety of factors - not the least significant being the time limit imposed on this phase of the overall study effort. Furthermore, most existing biographies and histories do not provide the kinds of information relevant to a study of command methods, techniques, and practices. The commanders selected are, therefore, among those concerning whom sufficient materials were available for research - including both primary and secondary sources.

The design of a questionnaire guide and the interviewing of relevant and knowledgeable persons helped to overcome some of the limitations and weaknesses of pure historical research. The kinds of information sought through the various individual analyses, and the makeup of the final composite portrait, were dictated by considerations of *currently* significant problem areas. The *historical* study was, in other words, undertaken with *present* and *future* needs and requirements always in mind.

It is believed that, by combining historical research, questionnaire, and interview techniques, a mechanism was created whereby the deficiencies of each of these were minimized. Interviews suffer from

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the biases of the interviewer and are dependent upon the memories and recollections of the interviewee. Questionnaires alone do not allow for a probing of responses. Historical research can too easily beguile the researcher and lead to preoccupation with things past. Taken together, however, and properly employed, the three techniques permit in-depth analysis resulting in a broad and rich command portrait. It is our belief, then, that the results more than justify the considerable effort invested in this study of past commanders.

SUMMARY REPORT - HISTORICAL STUDIES

The individual analyses of the commanders studied as part of this "historical" segment of the overall project have been synthesized into a general command portrait. It is this composite which is summarized below.[1]

Organization

The composite command portrait is discussed under several general headings. These represent not only a logical and convenient mode of organization, but, more importantly, were suggested by the data and analyses themselves. The headings are indicative of those aspects of the command process viewed as important and/or critical by the various commanders studied.[2]

Historical Command Portrait

Mission Interpretation

The commander carefully evaluated all orders received from a higher headquarters. If, in his judgment, modifications appeared necessary - the assigned mission being in some critical respect "impracticable" -

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1. The more detailed portrait and the considerable body of data collected and analyzed for the individual studies are on file at the Office of the Director of Special Studies, Office of the Chief of Staff, Department of the Army.

2. In the interest of both simplicity and "readability", the command portrait described below is presented in the third person, past tense (the commander went; he remained; etc.). Each statement represents a broad "consensus" based on the several studies. Where important divergences from the common patterns occur, these will be noted and indicated as such.

he immediately made his objections and suggestions for revisions known to the issuing authority. (On *rare* occasions, orders were ignored.) The challenging of a higher authority's orders in no way constituted a breach of discipline; this was, rather, a manifestation of the commander's strong belief in the accuracy of his own estimate of the situation. Seeking above all to insure the success of the mission - minimizing the cost to his own units and maximizing the losses of the enemy - the commander was compelled to seek approval for changes in his orders when such changes were deemed necessary.

Physical Positioning of the Commander

Although the commander generally remained in his Command Post during the period in which orders were formulated, he left his CP as soon as practicable to reconnoiter the combat area and visit subordinate units. The majority of staff personnel remained at the CP; the commander was accompanied by only a small group of officers, the composition of this group varying according to need and circumstance. Contact was, however, maintained with the Command Post at all times and by whatever means were available.

During the actual *operations* phase, the commander moved well forward to a point where he could directly observe the course of battle - expecially in the *critical* combat zones, areas of concentrated effort. From such vantage points, and on the basis of his own evaluations of the situation, he sometimes personally called for artillery strikes and/or air strikes in support of engaged units. This practice was most characteristic of the German generals studied. (Present helicopter capabilities enhance a commander's mobility, enabling him to move more rapidly to critical zones, and providing him with an *airborne* observation platform. A possible *disadvantage* frequently cited is the tendency of helicopter availability to promote "oversupervision.")

Despite his involvement in the course of the battle, the commander was always conscious of the need to inform his Chief of Staff of any

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and all orders issued, modifications of orders made, or unscheduled actions undertaken while on the scene.

The commander often located his advance CP near the headquarters of main thrust units. This physical proximity provided a safeguard against the possibility of a breakdown in communications. It further permitted increased use of messengers, with a consequent reduction in radio traffic.

Issuing of Orders

The methods and techniques for issuing orders as reconstructed from the historical studies are roughly comparable to present-day patterns. The higher the headquarters, the greater was the likelihood that complete orders would be issued in written form. Fragmentary orders were, of course, issued as required by the changing situation - whether to initiate preparatory steps at the onset of an operation or to occasion corrective actions once the operation was under way.

Orders were issued by whatever means were available. The more contemporary of the commanders studied made extensive use of radio and telephone communications systems. Direct, personal confrontation was frequently the mechanism employed for the issuing of orders.

Finally, the commander insisted upon written confirmation of all orders delivered by word-of-mouth. Upon return to the Command Post, or during a lull in the battle, such written confirmation was made with the minimum possible delay.

Command Relationships

The commander utilized his staff as a link between himself and his subordinate commanders. He did not, however, permit his staff to become his *only* link. The commander assured a proper and close command relationship with subordinates by a variety of more direct mechanisms. Among these, visits to front-line unit commanders for purposes of

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consultation, and the occasional assembling of subordinates in his own
CP for discussion of upcoming or ongoing operations, were apparently
the most effective.

It should be noted that while the commander frequently discussed
operations with his subordinates, exchanging views and offering his
opinions, he generally avoided indicating the "how" of implementation
of his orders. (General Patton, for example, was most emphatic on this
point. He maintained that the person responsible for implementation
of a particular order should be permitted to devise the plans himself.)
The commander saw his primary role as that of an "advisor" to his sub-
ordinates with respect to the details of implementation. Generally,
the more experienced a subordinate commander, the less frequent the
intervention of the commander, and the greater the latitude he permitted
in the devising of specific means of implementation.

The commander's relationship with his Chief of Staff was generally
a close one. He depended upon his Chief to insure the smooth and effi-
cient running of his combat organization. He, accordingly, preferred
to select his Chief of Staff himself whenever this was possible, personal
compatablity being an important criterion for selection. (Napoleon devi-
ated somewhat from this pattern. He apparently placed less emphasis on
the "compatability" factor, his ultimate criterion for selection of his
entire staff being extensive combat command experience.)

In all instances where this information was available, it was the
established practice for the Chief of Staff to succeed to command when
the commander was lost. He served, of course, in this capacity only
temporarily – until such time as a suitable replacement could be designated
and brought in.

The practice with respect to the commanders of reserve elements
varied with the different commanders studied. The reserve commander
was stationed with the commander or with the Chief of Staff, on constant

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alert for immediate action. He was always kept informed of changes in the situation while awaiting an order for commitment of his unit.

Attitudes towards demonstrated incompetence in subordinates also varied. While some commanders were highly tolerant - generally insisting that a subordinate be given every possible opportunity to prove himself - others were equally insistent upon the necessity for immediate and automatic dismissal in the face of incompetence or dereliction of duty.

Staff Organization

Despite differences in nomenclature and description, the several historical studies revealed that staff organization followed, in fact, a fairly consistent pattern. The commander organized his staff into a relatively small and highly mobile forward operating group, and a considerably larger rear support and administration force.

The "Commander's Group," or "Advance Command Post," was staffed by a minimum of personnel. Specialists, such as artillery or engineering officers, accompanied the commander when the situation required their specific expertise.

The commander generally maintained his Chief of Staff as coordinator of activities at the "Main Command Post." A critical function which he expected his Chief of Staff to perform was that of keeping the flow of information moving abreast or ahead of combat developments.

The commander established clear guidelines and standards for his staff with regard to the types and specific items of information which were to be considered and treated as important. This was essential if critical information was to be separated out from the vast body of detailed data which constantly threatened to inundate his headquarters.

The commander seldom involved himself in routine staff business. He further encouraged chief staff officers to delegate non-critical and more routine matters to *their* subordinates.

Supervision of Operations

Analysis of the several historical studies suggests near-universal adherence to General Patton's maxim regarding supervision: "... issuance of an order ... is only about 5 percent of the responsibility of command. The other 95 percent is to insure, by personal observation, or through the interposing of staff officers, that the order is carried out."

Certain of the commanders studied employed aides or escort officers as observers. In some instances, this "observer" role included supervisory responsibilities. (Napoleon's aides-de-camp operated, in effect, as a "command-control" group. They were all high-ranking officers, were known throughout the command as "trusted envoys" of the Emperor, and were apparently also trusted and respected by the very officers they were detailed to supervise.)

Communications

The several commanders studied were all highly "communications conscious;" each took an active role in insuring complete communications planning, utilizing whatever means and mechanisms were available. At an earlier stage in history – when electrical and electronic communications systems were not available – messengers were apparently able to successfully cope with the communications load. The *volume* of traffic was, of course, considerably less then, but the speed with which messages were received and delivered remains nonetheless impressive.

In the case of the more contemporary commands studied, staff personnel leaving the CP were required to report back into some type of communications network. None of the commanders, however, created a special network for intra-staff communications to facilitate transmission of critical items.

The historical data indicate that simple field codes were employed in situations where enemy interception and deciphering did not endanger

the success of the operation; where enemy reaction time to intercepted messages was short enough to permit the taking of corrective actions, more elaborate codes were utilized. Attempts to impose complicated voice coding systems on assault troops were, however, considered unwise since such systems have the effect of delaying operations. The time factor was widely viewed as overshadowing security considerations.

Supply

As noted above with regard to communications, each of the commanders reviewed exhibited a strong personal interest in the logistics aspects of command. The Supply Officer was frequently included as part of the combat team - present in the operations CP where he could anticipate supply requirements as imposed by rapid shifts in the tactical situation. All commanders stressed that the benefits to be derived from their constant personal attention to logistics problems were extensive. Daily briefings, staff reports, and personal inspections were all mechanisms employed in the attempt to keep abreast of the supply situation.

Style of Command

It is fruitless to detail the personal characteristics and uniquely personal traits which contributed to the success of each of the men studied. The most significant point to be made in this connection is that *there is no one* personality type which could be offered as distinguishing the successful from the unsuccessful or ineffective commander.

The majority of the commanders studied exercised *forceful, personal* control over their entire command organizations. If a dichotomy can be posed as between the commander who relies extensively on his staff for initiating planning, overseeing implementation of orders, and generally supervising operations - and the commander who himself takes the lead and exercises the initiative in all command phases - then the commanders studied tend, as a group, to fall into the latter category.

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RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The guide employed as a research instrument for the historical section of the report is reproduced below. It should be recalled that this guide served to provide a framework for both the direct interviews and the more purely historical investigations into command methods and techniques.[3]

Section I. Planning Phase

1. In general, where did you station yourself during the planning phase of operations?

2. Was it your custom to accept orders from above without question? Was it frequently necessary to seek clarification of orders? Were you generally permitted to voice your opinions as to the feasibility of an operation and to seek acceptance of modifications in orders which you viewed as desirable?

3. Did you personally issue directives to your staff?

4. On what types or categories of information were directives based?

5. Did your directive generally represent your own personal concept of operations?

6. Did your subordinate commanders generally participate in the planning of operations?

7. Did you remain in the Command Post while the staff was preparing formal orders?

8. Were operations orders usually put into written form or were they issued orally?

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3. The questions are phrased as for direct interviews (where did *you* ..).

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9. Were oral orders always confirmed in writing?

10. How were you advised that orders had been prepared and were ready for transmission?

11. By what means did you communicate with your subordinate commanders?

12. Were orders issued directly or through staff channels?

13. Were operations ever initiated by fragmentary orders?

Section II. Staff Organization and Functions

1. How was your staff organized? In groups? Otherwise?

2. By what means of transportation did the staff move?

3. Were senior staff officers ever used to take dispatches to commanders of subordinate units?

4. Were senior staff officers used in a supervisory capacity vis-à-vis subordinate commanders?

5. How were you kept informed with regard to critical supply items?

6. How frequently did you personally inspect supply facilities?

7. Who would succeed to command if you became a casualty?

Section III. Operations Phase

1. What was your geographic position with respect to subordinate commands during the operations phase?

2. Did you ever personally intervene in the conduct of a subordinate unit?

3. At what point did you generally leave your Command Post?

4. Did you frequently offer guidance to your subordinate commanders?

5. What was your attitude and reaction to demonstrated incompetence?

6. Did you maintain contact with your Command Post when in the field?

7. By what means was such contact maintained?

8. When you left your Command Post, who generally accompanied you?

9. Did you establish an "Advanced CP" or "Tactical Operations Center"?

10. Where was the Advanced CP or "General's Group" usually located?

11. Did you at any time separate yourself from this forward group or "Advanced CP"?

12. What means of transportation did you generally employ?

13. Did you operate your own voice radio?

14. Which did you habitually use, radio or telephone?

15. Were battlefield transmissions in the clear?

16. Were prearranged codes ever used?

17. What do you believe are the effects of modern weapons systems and equipment on the concept of mobile operations? (This question was used only in direct interviews.)

18. What changes in World War II command methods and techniques do you feel would be required under present-day, European-Theatre conditions? (Asked only in interviews.)

19. Were pre-planned or tactical automatic formation responses to sudden military engagements used?

Section IV. Staff Organization During Operations

1. Was staff organization modified during the operations phase?

2. Was the Chief of Staff responsible for coordinating activities at the Main Command Post?

3. Did the artillery commander (and/or air liaison officer) generally accompany you in the field?

4. Were all staff elements always in contact?

5. Did you ever personally order and/or observe artillery (or air) strikes?

6. If a reserve element was used, did its commander accompany you or remain with his unit to await orders?

7. What contact was maintained with supply elements during the operations phase?

8. What displacement was made of the Command Post when it became necessary to plan a new operation?

9. When changes demanded rapid action, did you issue personal orders or was further staffing necessary?

10. Would you care to comment on major problems of command not covered in these questions? (Asked only in direct interviews.)